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A Brief Guide to United Nations Document Symbols and Official Records

I

United Nations document symbols are composed of capital letters and Arabic numerals. A slash (/) separates the components of a symbol. (Until 1978 Roman numerals were sometimes used to designate the number of a United Nations "session". In UN publications, document symbols are superseded by Sales Numbers in which Roman numerals stand for broad subject categories.)

The first letter(s) indicate(s) the main organ of the UN to which the document was submitted:

A/-	General Assembly
E/-	Economic and Social Council
S/-	Security Council
T/-	Trusteeship Council
ST/-	Secretariat

Documents of the International Court of Justice carry the initials of the Court - I.C.J.

The symbol after the first slash indicates which subsidiary body of the main organ produced the document. Here are some examples:

-/AC. .../-	Ad Hoc Committee or similar body
-/C. .../-	Standing; permanent; main committee
-/CN. .../-	Commission
-/CONF. .../-	Conference
-/GC. .../-	Governing Council
-/PC. .../-	Preparatory Committee
-/SC. .../-	Sub-committee
-/Sub. .../-	Sub-commission
-/WG. .../-	Working Group
A/CN.10*/-	Disarmament Commission of the General Assembly
E/ICEF/-	UNICEF (which reports to ECOSOC)

*Subsidiary bodies may be assigned an Arabic numeral which is usually in the consecutive order of their establishment.

Specific symbols also designate certain subsidiary organs of the UN, for instance:

CCPR/-	Human Rights Committee
CERD/-	Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
DP/-	UN Development Programme
TD/-	UN Conference on Trade and Development
UNEP/-	UN Environment Programme
WFC/-	World Food Council

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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Main Committees of the General Assembly are identified by the following symbols:

A/C.1/-	First Committee (Political and Security)
A/C.2/-	Second Committee (Economic and Financial)
A/C.3/-	Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural)
A/C.4/-	Fourth Committee (Decolonization)
A/C.5/-	Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary)
A/C.6/-	Sixth Committee (Legal)
A/SPC/-	Special Political Committee

NOTE: Beginning with the thirty-first session of the General Assembly (1976), a new system for numbering General Assembly documents was adopted. Instead of the consecutive numbers previously in use (e.g.: A/10115, A.10116, etc.), documents are now numbered in a separate series for each session. Each General Assembly session is indicated by the Arabic numeral that comes after the specific symbol of the body or subsidiary body concerned (e.g.: A/C.1/40/-). The final element in the symbol is consecutive for each series of documents. For example, A/40/2 is the second in the series of main documents of the General Assembly at its fortieth session, and A/C.5/40/12 is the twelfth document of the Fifth Committee for that session. Documents of meetings follow the same system. Thus, A/40/PV.1 is the text (procès verbal) of the first plenary meeting of the General Assembly at its fortieth session. A/C.2/40/SR.10 is the 10th summary record (and meeting) of the Second Committee of the General Assembly at the same (fortieth) session.

Examples of symbols that designate subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly are:

A/CN.4/-	International Law Commission
A/CN.9/-	Commission on International Trade Law
A/CONF.81/-	1979 United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development
A/CONF.101/-	Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
A/CONF.116/-	World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women
A/AC.159/-	Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean
A/AC.188/-	Ad Hoc Committee on the Drafting of an International Convention against the Taking of Hostages

The following letters are sometimes included in document symbols to denote the nature of the document. Examples:

-/BUR/-	General Committee documents
-/DEC/-	Decisions
-/INF/-	Information series (procedural questions)
-/Min. ...	Minutes
-/NGO/-	Statements by non-governmental organizations
-/PC/-	Preparatory Committee
-/PCN/-	Preparatory Commission
-/PET/-	Petitions

-/PV. ...	Procès-verbaux - Verbatim records of meetings (not for general distribution). These are later published as volumes of Plenary Meetings that are part of the Official Records of each session.
-/RES/-	Resolutions
-/SR. ...	Summary Records of meetings
-/WG. ...	Working Group
-/WP. ...	Working Paper
-/L. ...	Draft documents for limited distribution

To indicate the modification of documents, the following are used:

-/Add. ...	(Addendum) Indicates an addition
-/Summary	Indicates a summary of a report, prepared specifically to facilitate its consideration by an organ
-/Excerpt	Indicates the issuance of an excerpt from a document when only that portion is required
-/Rev. ...	(Revision) Indicates new version of a document, replacing texts previously issued
-/Amend. ...	(Amendment) Indicates the alteration, by decision of the competent authority, of a portion of an adopted formal text. (Not used to correct technical errors.)
-/Corr. ...	(Corrigendum) Corrects errors in the text of the original document
-/-*	The asterisk indicates a document re-issued for technical reasons

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

The sessional committees of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) are identified by the following symbols

E/1985/C.1/-	First Committee (Economic)
E/1985/C.2/-	Second Committee (Social)
E/1985/C.3/-	Third Committee (Programme and Co-ordination)

Sessional subsidiary bodies may also be established (e.g.: E/1985/WG.1: Sessional Working Group of Governmental Experts on the Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.)

The document symbols of the Economic and Social Council and its sessional committees consist of: the identifying letter of the Council, (E/-): the year; any subsidiary body or a symbol denoting the nature of the document; then the numerical order in which the document is issued (i.e.: E/1985/1, E/1985/SR.1, and E/1985/C.1/SR.1). Note, however: E/RES (or DEC)/1985/1, for the Council's resolutions and decisions.

In January, 1973, the Economic and Social Council modified the numbering of its sessions to current practice. Three sessions of the Council are held each calendar year. They are the organizational session, the first regular session and the second regular session, as opposed to the consecutive numbers previously used (i.e.: 64th session, 65th session). Should special sessions be held, they are assigned consecutive numbers within each year (e.g.: first special session, 1973; second special session, 1973).

At the end of each year the records of all the regular and any special sessions are issued in the series: Official Records of the Economic and Social Council. 19.. . Reports of the subsidiary bodies to the Council (e.g.: the Human Rights Commission, E/CN.4/.985/-; the Population Commission, E/CN.9/1935/-;) are published as supplements (the principal published reports) to the Official Records of the Council. These reports to the Council are identified as: Economic and Social Council Official Records. 19.. . Supplement No. -- . (See the selected list of ECOSOC Supplements below).

Examples of Economic and Social Council subsidiary bodies:

E/C.7/-	Committee on Natural Resources
E/C.10/-	Commission on Transnational Corporations
E/CN.4/-	Commission on Human Rights
E/CN.5/-	Commission on Social Development
E/CN.6/-	Commission on the Status of Women
E/CN.11/-	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
E/CN.12/-	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
E/CN.14/-	Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
E/ECE/-	Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)
E/ECWA/-	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)
E/ICEF/-	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

II

The OFFICIAL RECORDS of the United Nations are sales items. They include:

General Assembly Official Records
Security Council Official Records
Economic and Social Council Official Records
Trusteeship Council Official Records
International Court of Justice Official Records
Trade and Development Board Official Records

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OFFICIAL RECORDS are published by session and include:

(a) Verbatim records of plenary meetings;
(b) Summary records of the Main Committees;
(c) Annexes which contain selected documents for each Assembly agenda item number, and a checklist of documents pertaining to each agenda item;
(d) Numbered supplements consisting of annual reports to the General Assembly from sub-bodies and special committees;
(e) Resolutions and decisions;
(f) Additional reports, each published by their title and agenda number.

A complete index for each session is produced by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library. It is published as Index to proceedings of the General Assembly, -- session 19 -- (series ST/LIB/SER.B/A.-).

..... (See attached list of supplements for the 39th session of the General Assembly)

SECURITY COUNCIL OFFICIAL RECORDS are published by calendar year and include:

(a) Verbatim records published individually by meeting;
(b) Supplements, issued quarterly, that contain selected documents (reports and other communications) that are consecutively arranged by symbol and indexed by subject;
(c) Supplements that contain special reports, (e.g., the Trusteeship Council report to the Security Council on the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands);
(d) A supplement of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Security Council during the year.

An index for each year is published as Index to proceedings of the Security Council. "nth year" - 19--, (e.g.: Fortieth year - 1985).

NOTE: The annual Report of the Security Council is published as supplement No. 2 of the Official Records of the General Assembly. (See General Assembly supplement list).

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OFFICIAL RECORDS are published by calendar year and include:

(a) Summary records of meetings (according to decisions 1982/105 and 1985/200, ECOSOC has discontinued the provision of summary records for its sessional committees for experimental periods of two years);
(b) Supplements with the annual reports of subsidiary and related bodies (see selected list below);
(c) Supplements of ECOSOC resolutions and decisions;
(d) Special studies (published as sales items).

An index for each year is published as Index to the proceedings of the Economic and Social Council 19-- (series ST/LIB/SER.B/E. --).

NOTE: The annual Report of the Economic and Social Council is published as supplement No. 3 of the Official Records of the General Assembly. (See General Assembly supplement list).

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OFFICIAL RECORDS SUPPLEMENTS

The following is a list of the most recent supplements of the Economic and Social Council. For further information, please write to: United Nations Publications.*

1984 ECOSOC SUPPLEMENTS

Supplement No. 1	Resolutions and Decisions, 1984 Organizational session, (7-10 and 21 February and 16 March 1984) First Regular Session (1-25 May 1984)	$ 7.00
Supplement No. 1A	Resolutions and Decisions, 1984 Second Regular Session (4-27 July 1984)	$ 5.00

1984 ECOSOC SUPPLEMENTS (cont'd)

Supplement No. 2	Report of the Population Commission on its Twenty-second Session (18-20 January 1984)	$ 7.00
Supplement No. 3	Report of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on its Eighth Special Session (6-10 February 1984)	$ 8.50
Supplement No. 4	Report of the Commission on Human Rights on its Fortieth Session (6 February-16 March 1984)	$25.00
Supplement No. 5	Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its Thirtieth Session (15-25 February 1984)	$ 8.50
Supplement No. 6	Report of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control on its Eighth Session (21-30 March 1984)	$ 9.50
Supplement No. 7	Report of the Committee for Development Planning on its Twentieth Session (17-21 May 1984)	$ 6.00
Supplement No. 8	Report of the Commission on Transnational Corporations on its Tenth Session (17-27 April 1984)	$ 7.00
Supplement No. 9	Report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (24 April-4 May 1984)	$ 6.00
Supplement No. 10	Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (Organizational Meeting for 1984 and the Thirty-First Session)	$ 9.50
Supplement No. 11	Annual Report of the Economic Commission for Africa (3 May 1983-28 May 1984)	$10.00
Supplement No. 12	Annual Report of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (16 May 1981-6 April 1984)	$27.00
Supplement No. 13	Annual Report of the Economic Commission for Europe (24 April 1983-14 April 1984)	$13.50
Supplement No. 14	Annual Report of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (30 April 1983-27 April 1984)	$16.50

1985 ECOSOC SUPPLEMENTS

Supplement No. 1A	Resolutions and Decisions, 1985 Second Regular Session (3-26 July 1985)	$ 7.00
Supplement No. 2	Report of the Commission on Human Rights on its Forty-first Session (4 February-15 March 1985)	$27.00
Supplement No. 3	Report of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on its Thirty-first Session (11-20 February 1985)	$ 9.00
Supplement No. 4	Report of the Commission for Social Development on its Twenty-ninth Session (18-27 February 1985)	$ 9.50

1985 ECOSOC SUPPLEMENTS (cont'd)

Supplement No. 5	Report of the Population Commission on its Twenty-third Session (19-28 February 1985)	$ 7.00
Supplement No. 6	Report of the Statistical Commission on its Twenty-third Session (25 February-6 March 1985)	$ 7.00
Supplement No. 7	Report of the Committee on Natural Resources on its 9th Session (8-17 April 1985)	$ 7.00
Supplement No. 8	Report of the Commission on Transnational Corporations on its Eleventh Session (10-19 April 1985)	$ 7.00
Supplement No. 9	Report of the Committee for Development Planning on its Twenty-first Session (19-21 November 1984: 20-23 April 1985)	$ 7.00
Supplement No. 10	Report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (15-26 April 1985)	$ 7.00
Supplement No. 11	Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme on its Thirty-second Session	$11.00
Supplement No. 12	Annual Report of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (28 April-29 March 1985)	$19.00
Supplement No. 13	Annual Report of the Economic Commission for Europe (15 April 1984-27 April 1985)	$16.50

TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL OFFICIAL RECORDS are published by session (e.g.: 51st session, 1984). They include:

(a) Summary records of meetings (in some cases verbatim records have been published: see sales catalogue of Official Records for listing);
(b) Supplements which contain the reports of visiting missions to the Trust Territores;
(c) Resolutions and decisions;
(d) Sessional Fascicle which includes the agenda and content of meetings, a checklist of documents, and annexes (selected documents).

An index for each session is published as: Index to the proceedings of the Trusteeship Council, -- session 19 -- (series ST/LIB/SER.B/T.--).

INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE OFFICIAL RECORDS are published on termination of each case by the Registry of the Court, and are printed in the Netherlands. They include:

(a) Reports of Judgements, Advisory Opinions and Orders in fascicles which are later published in a yearly indexed volume;
(b) Pleadings, Oral Arguments, Documents.

A Yearbook 19-- - 19-- is published in the third quarter of each year. The Catalogue of publications of the International Court of Justice may be obtained from: United Nations Publications.*

NOTE: The annual Report of the International Court of Justice is published as supplement No. 4 of the Official Records of the General Assembly.

The Report of the International Law Commission is published as supplement No. 10 of the Official Records of the General Assembly. The summary records of each session are in Volume I of the Yearbook of the International Law Commission. Part One of Volume II comprises the reports of special rapporteurs and other documents examined during the session. Part Two of Volume II includes Supplement No.10 (see above), and the Check-list of documents of the session.

TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD OFFICIAL RECORDS (UNCTAD) are published by session. They include:

(a) Summary records of meetings:;
(b) Annexes (selected documents);
(c) Supplements containing the reports of subsidiary bodies;
(d) Resolutions, agreed conclusions and/or decisions;
(e) Special studies (published as sales items).

PUBLICATIONS IMPORTANT TO THOSE STUDYING THE UNITED NATIONS

- Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice $ 1.25

- Basic Facts about the United Nations This paperback describes in summary form the work of the United Nations. (UN Sales No. E.83.I.8; $ 2.50)

- Everyman's United Nations, 8th ed. (UN Sales No. E.67.I.2; $10.00), and Everyone's United Nations, 9th ed. (UN Sales No. E.79.I.5; $12.50-Cloth, $ 7.95-Paper).

These volumes constitute a basic history of the United Nations and its family of organizations and contain the text of the Charter. The first covers the years 1945-1965, and the second emphasizes the years 1966-1977/78.

- UN Chronicle This magazine summarizes current United Nations activities; sometimes reprints or summarizes important reports.
Annual subscription: $14.00
Single copy: $ 2.00

- Yearbook of the United Nations A one-volume comprehensive account of the discussions, decisions and activities of the United Nations and related bodies by year (indexed). The latest edition is: Yearbook of the United Nations, 1981, Volume 35. Previous editions remain in print (and may be consulted at United Nations depository libraries).
(UN Sales No. E.84.I.1; $75.00)

- "The Annotated Agenda" is issued on 15 June each year. It gives a brief background and cites the relevant documents for each item of the provisional agenda of the next regular session of the General Assembly.
(Documents symbol: A/no. of session/100).

- Rules of Procedure for United Nations organs

	Sales No.	Price
General Assembly	85.I.13	$ 7.00
Security Council (Provisional)	83.I.4	$ 2.00
Economic and Social Council	83.I.9	$ 4.00

- UNDOC: Current Index (ST/LIB/SER.M/--) Published since 1979. This is a checklist with full bibliographic citations of United Nations documents and publications received by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library at United Nations Headquarters (arranged by subject, author, title and issuing body). Issued 10 times a year (monthly except July and August) with annual cumulations. (Annual subscription: $120.00)

NOTE: UNDOC was previously published as UNDEX. From 1974 to 1978, it was published in three series: Subject Index, Country Index, and List of Documents. From 1958 to 1973 it was published monthly as UN Documents Index and had an annual Cumulative Checklist and Cumulative Index.

United Nations documents and other materials (non-sales items, usually mimeographed) may be consulted at any United Nations depository library on the enclosed list, or they may be requested through the Public Inquiries Unit, United Nations, Room GA-57, New York, N.Y. 10017.

For documents of more than 50 pages, the United Nations asks for a contribution of $0.05 per page, plus postage, to cover the cost of materials sent. As a rule, documents are not held in stock beyond two years or whenever they become published as sales items.

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*United Nations sales publications may be consulted at any United Nations depository library and/or ordered from: United Nations Publications, DC2-853, New York, N.Y. 10017. When ordering, please quote the sales number in addition to the title requested. To save time and postage, enclose payment with your order.